



TORONTO STAR Teacher Award

2014 HONOUR ROLL

Congratulations to the following Ontario certified elementary and secondary teachers who were nominated for the 6th Annual Toronto Star Teacher Award by students, parents and colleagues from across the province.

Sheri Alcordo Driftwood PS, Toronto
 Leslie Alvares St Richard CS, Scarborough
 Kathy Anderson SickKids Hospital, Toronto
 Cheryl Andrews Summit Heights PS,
 North York
 William Assaff Oakridge JPS, Toronto
 Elizabeth Ballantyne Emily Carr SS, Woodbridge
 Bernice Black Bedford Park JPS, Toronto
 Susan Brioux Mother Teresa CES, Bradford
 Marie Buccella St. David CES
 Sondra Burrows Heritage Glen PS, Oakville
 Millie Cardamone Captain R Wilson PS,
 Oakville
 Binh Chang Saint Bonaventure CS,
 Toronto
 Sandy Chase Goldcrest PS, Brampton
 Enerjeti Cipi Greenbriar MS, Brampton
 Mary Conlin Duke of Connaught JSPS,
 Toronto
 Sharon Connelly Mississauga SS, Mississauga
 Hugh Corbett St Andrews JHS, Toronto
 Steve Coughlin Notre Dame CSS, Brampton
 Adam Cox Emily Carr SS,
 Woodbridge
 Gina Creta San Lorenzo Ruiz CES,
 Markham
 Luisa Di Gulio Holy Name CES,
 King City
 Lorelee Dick Gladys Speers PS, Oakville
 Marie Claude Douville Rosethorn JS, Toronto
 Dianne Eberlin Beverley Acres PS,
 Richmond Hill
 Ian Esquivel City School, Toronto
 Gordon Ferguson Captain R Wilson PS,
 Oakville
 Kim Findlay Shelter Bay PS, Mississauga
 Justine Gadouchis Kipling CI, Etobicoke
 Karen Gal Eitz Chaim (Spring Farm),
 Thornhill
 Kayla Garrett CW Jefferys CI, North York
 Arlene Graham Goldcrest PS, Brampton
 Tracy Grozier Gandatsetiagon PS,
 Pickering

Nick Gustin Lorne Park SS, Mississauga
 Malcolm Hamilton Notre Dame CSS, Brampton
 Harry Hass Monsignor John Pereyma
 CSS, Oshawa
 Dr. David Hayes Westview Centennial SS,
 Toronto
 Keith Hoare Thistletown CI, Rexdale
 Simon Isdell-Carpenter William Lyon Mackenzie CI,
 Toronto
 Cathy Iwankow St Marguerite d'Youville CS
 Steve Johnson Don Mills CI, North York
 Samantha Jones-Potts Georgetown DHS,
 Halton Hills
 Tiiu Kajak Earl Haig JPS, Toronto
 Gregory Karout Clinton Street PS, Toronto
 Tom Khuu Greenbriar MS, Brampton
 Laura King Sheridan Park PS,
 Mississauga
 Talia Kirschbaum Greenbriar MS, Brampton
 Peter Ladas Greenbriar MS, Brampton
 Edward LaRocque Uxbridge SS, Uxbridge
 Helen Laruccia John English JMS, Etobicoke
 Sandra Lavorato St Jerome CS, Mississauga
 Risa Levitt Allenby PS, Toronto
 Mr. Lewin Emery CI, Toronto
 Xochitl Lugo The Valleys SPS,
 Mississauga
 Meredith MacKenzie Settler's Green PS,
 Mississauga
 Alexandra Maric-Jones Jackman Avenue JPS,
 Toronto
 Luke Martin Glen Ames SPS, Toronto
 Marianna Martin Our Lady of Perpetual Help
 John Merlini Christ The King CSS,
 Georgetown
 Parry Milbury Roland Michener PS, Ajax
 Zahra Mirali Sir Samuel B Steele JPS,
 Scarborough
 Lui Muoio Lincoln Alexander PS,
 Markham
 Pavel Muresan R.H. King Academy,
 Scarborough
 Eleanor (Elly) Murray Dr Bette Stephenson
 Centre for Learning,
 Richmond Hill

Shana Murree St Joseph's CSS, Cornwall
 Dana Nacuta Adrienne Clarkson PS,
 Richmond Hill
 Hudaser Nizam Chinguacousy SS, Brampton
 Lisa Ocampo Karen Kain School of the
 Arts, Toronto
 Chang Oh Downsview SS, Toronto
 Shailajia Pasumarty Dixon Grove JMS, Toronto
 Jennifer Peace Captain R Wilson PS,
 Oakville
 Ben Peebles Dr Eric Jackman ICS,
 Toronto
 Tony Persaud Goldcrest PS, Brampton
 Jessica Purdy Burlington Christian
 Academy, Burlington
 Geeta Rao Briarcrest JS, Etobicoke
 Françoise Raoult Lord Lansdowne PS, Toronto
 Abdel Rassi Spanish Centre, Toronto
 Stephanie Ratti Silver Stream PS,
 Richmond Hill
 Kandace Raymond Greenbriar MS, Brampton
 J. Reid-Zajac Burrows Hall JPS, Toronto
 Angela Reinchenbach Esker Lake PS,
 Brampton
 Heidi Ross Goldcrest PS, Brampton
 Marie Sadurski Ven Michael J McGivney
 CES, Brampton
 Erin Shaver Greenbriar MS, Brampton
 Joe Skelly Pierre E. Trudeau PS,
 Oshawa
 Maurice Snelgrove The Gallery Wall,
 Scarborough
 Kevin Snowball Erin PS, Erin
 George Stribopoulos Emily Carr SS, Woodbridge
 Allison Tenn-Yuk Iroquois Ridge HS, Oakville
 Bill Thompson St Gregory CS, Picton
 Dave Treherne Lescon PS, North York
 Lesley Utting-Polchak Turner Fenton SS, Brampton
 Liz Watt Bessborough Drive PS,
 Toronto
 Paul Weight Danforth C&T, Toronto
 Catherine Whiteside Don Mills CI, North York
 Patricia Wotherspoon Stephen Lewis SS, Thornhill

TORONTO STAR

CLASSROOM CONNECTION

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thestar.com

September 25, 2014



VINCE TALOTTA/TORONTO STAR

Suviana Burey, 17, Kareem Bennett, 18, and Destiny Henry, 17, are among a group of students from Jane and Finch who have created works reflecting their lives, struggles and dreams for their community.

Youth use art to redefine community

Artists showcase their struggles, dreams at York University

JENNIFER PAGLIARO
CRIME REPORTER

At a new art exhibit at York University, the walls do talk — with the voices of eight youth from Jane and Finch, who speak about their personal tragedies as they counter 'hood stereotypes.

"People don't understand that it's not a 'jungle.' It's not a 'war zone,'" said Suviana Burey, 18. She's eager to say that "crime" should not be the noun that defines her part of the city.

She and seven other young artists, along with mentors, have been working together since October on the second floor of Westview Centennial Secondary School to create *If We Ruled the World* — an experimental exhibit that opened earlier this month at the Art Gallery of York University.

After first connecting at Success Beyond Limits, a mentoring and youth outreach centre housed at the high school, the young artists wrote spoken-word pieces, turned them into videos and created drawings and paintings inspired by their own verses.

Their work collectively draws a sharp, fresh perspective on life in their community, where they find

strength in spite of trauma and are building a better future in a place they are proud to call home.

"Basically, don't let the casualties that we live in turn out how our reality becomes," says the quiet, introspective Kareem Bennett, 18.

His poem walks through the dark places, where youth have met violent deaths, and reflects on how those tragedies have shaped him.

Through these walls, I put emphasis on my character / Surrounded by concrete, I speak only to survive in these areas

Last year, four teens were shot and killed just blocks from Westview. Last week marked one year since 15-year-old St. Aubyn Rodney was shot and killed inside his own apartment; afterwards, the students at Westview arrived at school wearing R.I.P. T-shirts to remember the one they knew as "Tubby."

Bennett didn't know those young men well. But their deaths reminded him of others he has known, who have also been taken from the community.

"I carry the good memories of that person," he says of the friend he wrote about, Stackz — better known as 15-year-old Jordan Manners, who was gunned down in a stairwell at nearby C.W. Jefferys Collegiate Institute in 2007.

"They help shape my attitude today."

ART continued on GT4

Jane-Finch job camp offers students hope

March break program goes downtown to give teens a chance to see their potential

LOUISE BROWN
EDUCATION REPORTER

They live in what is officially Toronto's "least livable neighbourhood" and go to the school ranked with the highest "need."

But 60 Toronto teens from the Jane-Finch community have spent their March break plotting ways out of such seemingly grim prospects by learning to set their career sights high and their contacts wide — and make a mean video-loaded digital resume.

They took the crash course on careers in a hip heritage office downtown, all exposed bricks and beams and big red couches, where a parade of webmasters, sportscasters, bankers and lawyers popped by from nearby offices to share tips for success.

"This is training so when we grow up, we'll be ready for society — and we'll know how to find a job," said Grade 9 student David Ofori, 14, one of the busload of teens from Westview Centennial Secondary School who are part of camp run by the mentoring program Success Beyond Limits.

The camp is usually held in the mall at Jane and Finch, which a new rat-



COLIN MCCONNELL/TORONTO STAR

Sixty students took part in the Success Beyond Limits career program where a parade of experts shared job tips.

ing system this week called the least walkable, green, healthy or prosperous part of the city. But this year, organizers decided to bring the kids downtown to the airy loft offices of web giant Mozilla, in a 90-year-old building on Adelaide St. near Spadina Ave., where clusters of job pros-

pects, experts and corporate hubs are mere steps away.

"We heard a sportscaster, lawyer, banker, environmentalist — as long as we're learning about our future, it's great," said Grade 12 student Mohamed Ibrahim, 17, who has been accepted to York University this fall

for social work.

The students took afternoon field trips to learn about job opportunities at law firms, government offices, TIFF Bell Lightbox and the CBC, where they went to Thursday's live taping of the George Stroumbouloupoulos show featuring Premier

Kathleen Wynne.

"The program is about getting you to think about your life differently — the choices you think you have are based on what you think your opportunities are, but if you expand what you think those opportunities are, your choices open up," said Chris Penrose, executive director of Success Beyond Limits.

"That's why it's important to go to a live taping. If you sit at home and watch TV, you think, oh, maybe I'd like to be a TV host. But if you come to a taping and see the production assistants and all the other behind-the-scenes roles, you see more options," Penrose said.

Mozilla staff gave them lessons on using social media to brand projects, products and themselves, and how to create a digital resume, complete with video clips. Mozilla's Amira Dhalla noted how companies use corporate networking site LinkedIn to recruit, and showed them her own LinkedIn profile with a slide show, "10 Things People Should Know About Me Before They Hire Me."

Said Grade 12 student Abdul Nur, 18: "We're learning it doesn't always have to be a conventional path to success — school, then university, then work. And careers can be much more interesting than I ever thought, including running a business.

"We've learned a bit about how to bring your ideas to fruition."

Julia Gibran leads students through a yoga session at C.W. Jeffreys Collegiate Institute.



Just breathe

In-school program teaches kids that yoga is a way to cope with stress at school and home

ISABEL TEOTONIO
LIFE REPORTER

On those mornings when Blain Romain is in a “terrible mood” at school — the kind when he doesn’t talk about what’s bothering him, slams doors and ignores teachers’ requests to remove his hat — only one thing brings him comfort.

“I go to yoga and I feel better. Relieved,” says the 16-year-old in Grade 11 at Bendale Business and Technical Institute in Scarborough.

“It’s like a dog being let out of a cage. It’s like ‘Woooo.’ I can’t explain it, but it takes away the bad and brings in the good.”

It’s a sentiment being echoed by a growing number of youth participating in classes offered by New Leaf Yoga Foundation, a charitable organization that teaches yoga and mindfulness to kids from marginalized communities where there’s a lack of supportive services. The goal is to work with kids who are strug-

gling with issues at home and school, which could put them on the path to facing bigger challenges.

Through yoga movements and conscious breathing, youth are learning to be still, to focus, to relax and to have greater self-control — life skills that stay with them after they’ve rolled up the yoga mat.

This fall, New Leaf expanded its partnership with the Toronto District School Board and now offers weekly programming in eight schools — three elementary and five secondary.

Last month, classes started in the Jane and Finch area at Westview Centennial Secondary School and C.W. Jeffreys Collegiate Institute.

YOGA continued on L7



Landon Rands, 11, says that yoga has taught him to walk away from conflict.

STEVE RUSSELL PHOTOS/TORONTO STAR